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UNCLAS BRUSSELS 000075

SIPDIS

STATE FOR HAITI TASKFORCE ONE:MROSSER, WHA:SWILLIAMS AND
EUR/WE
STATE PASS USAID FOR MAURA O'NEILL

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [EAID](#) [ECON](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PREF](#) [HA](#) [BE](#)

SUBJECT: TFHA1: COORDINATION OF BELGIAN ASSISTANCE TO HAITI

REF: STATE 4854

¶1. Emboff talked to Geert Vansintjan, Director of the Office of Humanitarian Aid, Food Aid and Rehabilitation on January 21 to thank him for Belgium's contributions to Haiti earthquake relief on January 20. Belgium has contributed a "B-fast" team of up to 130 workers who focus on search and rescue assisted by dogs and operating a field hospital and a water purification unit (reftels). Over the weekend of January 15-16, the Embassy received a request from the Government of Belgium for U.S. military protection for the Belgian workers.

The Embassy passed the requests to the State Department operations center and ensured that security was provided as requested. According to Vansintjan, the B-Fast team is likely to stay in Haiti longer than foreseen. He described the Haiti situation as the "biggest crisis Belgium has confronted since B-Fast was set up." The field hospital is to be extended and combined with a Red Cross hospital operated by Germans.

¶2. The arrival of the B-Fast team was coordinated through the UN's OCHA and to some extent its operations are being coordinated with U.S. forces on the ground in Haiti. Belgium has also promised one million euros in response to the Flash Appeal, which is earmarked for UNICEF, FAO and the Red Cross.

However, Belgium is relying on the UN for coordination of its overall assistance effort more than on the United States.

GUTMAN

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